The people of Travancore had no voice in shaping the educational policy of the Madras University. In the Senate, the Syndicate and the Academic Council, there were only very few Travancoreans. Travancoreans were not appointed in the institutions attached to the University. The Travancore students got no opportunity to attend the University Lectures nor were they benefited by the University Library maintained at a very heavy cost.

The establishment of a separate independent University for the State was essential to remove the educational disabilities suffered by the people and to enable the system being revised in conformity with the requirements of the country and the wishes of the people. There were separate Universities for the Urdu, Telugu and Canarese languages. It was a pity that the sister language Malayalam alone had no University of its own. The Government should take immediate steps for the establishment of an All-Kerala University, including the Malayalam speaking countries of Cochin and Malabar. There might be some difficulty about the place of location of the University. Trivandrum would be the best place; but if Cochin and Malabar were to insist on a more central place, Alwaye could be chosen for it.

A committee should be appointed to investigate into the respective rights and duties of the three Governments, *viz.*, the Travancore, Cochin and Madras, in the matter of the All-Kerala University. The committee should also be empowered to start the preliminary works connected with the establishment of the proposed University.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Govindan. You know that some time ago a committee was appointed to consider the question of the establishment of a University for the State and that that committee has submitted its report. Government have that report under consideration; and as circumstances, financial and other, permit, the matter will certainly be taken up.

74. Elementary Education.

MR. M. GOVINDAN (*Nominated*) said that it was 114 years ago, at the time of Her Highness Rani Gouri Parvathi Bhai, that Government recognised its duty to impart public instruction to its subjects. But for more than three-fourths of a century, education was confined to a few classes, more than 60 per cent. of the population being denied admission to the schools, on the ground of caste disabilities, with the result that these communities fell behind so far that, even after the schools were opened to their children also, they still remained backward in point of education. The Census figures of 1921, showing the number of illiterates in the State, showed the poor results of the educational efforts of both the Government and of the private recognised institutions for over a century. Of the total population of the State, excluding children under 5 years, only 27·9 per cent. were literate, the remaining 72 per cent. or roughly three-fourths of the population still remaining illiterate. In Ceylon, Burma and Maldives the rate of literacy notes

much higher. The boast that Travancore was in the forefront of educated India was bound to vanish unless a measure of compulsory education was adopted.

Another argument in favour of adopting a measure of compulsory education was that out of the large sum of Rs. 26 lakhs spent every year for elementary education, a large amount was wasted, as more than 50 per cent. of the pupils getting admission to the first class in an elementary school, left it before reaching the fourth class and lapsed into illiteracy. The only remedy suggested by the Government, in the Administration Report for 1104, where the above question was commented upon, was to increase the opportunities for a complete course by developing the incomplete primary schools which numbered 1,697 in 1104, into complete primary schools with four classes. But the Government did not appear to be serious in the above suggestion, for in the report for 1105 this feature of educational wastage had not even been adverted to. The remedy suggested too was not effective. The real remedy for this lay in compulsion and the State should have no hesitation in adopting a mild measure of compulsion. The proposal was not a new one. Sixteen years back, the late Mr. P. K. Kesava Pillai introduced a bill in the Legislative Council, providing for a measure of compulsion in elementary education. But the bill was thrown out as it did not provide for the financial aspect of the question and as the mover of the bill was opposed to the introduction of any additional cess. But it had to be conceded that there was no use in asking for costly reforms without offering suggestions regarding the necessary finances and without the willingness to submit to additional taxation, if needed.

There were now roughly three thousand Vernacular schools of which more than two thousand were housed in unsubstantial and flimsy buildings. These buildings were constructed 20 years ago, during the time of the late Deputy Director of Vernacular Education, Mr. P. Ramaswamy Aiyer, when a wave of enthusiasm for the spread of elementary education swept the land. Most of the buildings were constructed at the expense of the people. The buildings were mostly unsubstantial and a good number of them collapsed during the heavy rains last year and the year before, with the result that most of the schools were now housed in rented buildings unsuited for the purpose, in many cases away from the original sites. This was a matter which demanded the serious attention of the Government. As the rebuilding of all the schools requiring reconstruction would involve heavy expenditure, the work need not be taken up simultaneously in respect of all the schools. A steady programme of building construction, spread over a number of years, should be adopted by the Government. Another important factor also deserved the notice of the Government in this connection. The schools now established were not all in places where there was need; and in some places where there was need there were no schools. This was only natural as all the schools put up at the cost of the people, where ever they might be situated, were taken up by the Government.

In order to prevent such over-lapping and to supply local needs, an Educational Statistician should be deputed to tour round the whole State and make an educational survey and suggest sites where schools have to be newly opened, mapping out the whole of the State into educational units or *pakuthies* according to educational requirements. A fresh appointment need not be created for this purpose, but an officer already in service, with the required qualification and status, should be deputed for this work. A similar survey had been conducted in the sister State of Mysore.

It was not enough to have good school buildings and equipment. The training given should be such as to serve as a proper foundation for higher education and to fit the pupils to become good citizens. Liberal and technical education had diverse objects. Liberal education did not aim directly at imparting instruction in any branch of knowledge, with a view to enable the pupils to earn their livelihood. It aimed only at the harmonious development of the powers to fit the pupils for good citizenship. To cultivate the powers of the mind, the education of the senses was a necessary preliminary. It was for this purpose that manual training had been devised. Manual training was indispensable to furnish a proper foundation for liberal education. In the matter of manual training, the Government had not been following a steady policy. For some time there was a European Officer to teach the subject. But he had left the service. Enthusiasm in manual training was flagging. A competent European Officer should be appointed to help the Director to introduce manual training in all the elementary schools in the State. He should study the local conditions and adapt the nature of the training to them.

Another suggestion the member made in this connection was that the primary course should be extended to five years. A boy who had undergone a course of four years only could not acquire sufficient literacy to remain literate all his life. In Mysore, the primary course extended to five years.

In conclusion, the member reqested the Dewan to advise Her Highness the Maha Rani Regent, to complete the superstructure of the noble educational edifice raised on the foundation laid by Her Highness's illustrious predecessor, H. H. Rani Gouri Parvathi Bhai, more than a century ago, by introducing compulsory primary education, in selected areas.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Govindan. The main points which you stressed so eloquently have already struck the Government and means for accomplishing the objects which you have in view are in contemplation.

First you mentioned the necessity for school buildings. That is a matter which the Government have under their consideration. As a matter of fact, year by year, a few buildings for schools are being put up by the Government. As you yourself observed, in a wave of enthusiasm, as it were, a large number of schools was started at the same time

in, perhaps, unsuitable buildings; and it would, as you conceded, be difficult to house all these institutions in pucca buildings all at once. Government have provided and are providing buildings for some of these schools year after year and hope that after some time there would be suitable buildings for all the schools.

With regard to the waste of educational effort in the early stages of primary education, that also is a matter which has been engaging the attention of the Government. But, this was prominently and definitely brought to notice only in the recent past and attempts are being made to avoid that waste. One of the means suggested—and that is being adopted as far as possible—is not to allow schools to be started which would stop with the second or third class, for Government think that the waste is due to the fact that many of the schools teach up to the second class and no higher. The pupils of these localities have perforce to be content with studying up to the second or the third class. If they want higher education, they will have to go to other localities. Therefore the first attempt of the Government is to put an end to that kind of waste and to find means for avoiding it and as far as possible to insist upon all primary schools to teach up to the fourth class.

It is doubtful whether the difference between continued literacy and continued illiteracy depends upon a difference between four and five years of training. A better reason seems to be that even the four years is not being availed of by pupils.

Then you referred to the quality and nature of the education that is now imparted. The complaint that the system of education as followed now is unsuitable in several respects is not confined to Travancore alone, but exists throughout the whole of India and the world. The question is how far that has to be remedied. Attempts are being made everywhere to find ways and means of doing it. This Government also, like other Governments, are making an attempt in that direction. For one thing, the introduction of manual training in schools is evidence of that attempt. It may be, as you say, that the intention of the Government in introducing this subject in schools has not been as widely appreciated as it should be, so that in some of the schools the subject is taught in a more or less mechanical manner without introducing into it the spirit which is necessary, if all the benefit that it is possible to get out of it, should be derived.

When I replied yesterday to a representation regarding the combination of industrial education with general education, it was not merely about the difference between liberal education and technical education that I was thinking—I was thinking of the difference between merely giving an aptitude for physical work and the training necessary for a person to take to a particular profession. Aptitude for manual work is necessary, absolutely necessary, as you yourself said. One of the main evils that leads to unemployment at present is the disinclination of our educated or semi-educated young men to take to any kind of manual work. It is quite essential that that spirit should be broken and

that every man, however educated he may be in his own eyes or in the eyes of the world, should feel an inclination for technical work of any kind, for manual labour, intellectual labour and any other kind of labour. It is with this object that manual training has been introduced in schools.

Government are also of the opinion that manual training need not be of a uniform kind throughout all the schools in the State. The question of adapting manual training to the leading industry in any particular locality and of differentiating the kind of the manual training according to the main industry that is prevalent in the locality is under consideration.

The other useful and valuable suggestions made by you will be considered.

75. Educational Reforms

MR. A. P. NAIR (*Municipal Council, Neyyattinkara*) said that the Education Department was the most important branch in the State administration. The system of education now in vogue was the one which was formulated so early as 1070 by Dr. Mitchell and revised again in 1085. It had not been possible to make any substantial change in the system to suit modern requirements and changed conditions, till now. From the time of the late Dewan, Dewan Bahadur Sir. M. Krishnan Nair, the necessity of reforming the educational system of the State was being pressed on the attention of the Government, but without any result. The present system of education was the cause of the physical and mental degeneration of the youths of the country. The present unemployment, poverty, communal bias, economic distress, lack of health and increase in diseases, in fact, the present moral, mental and material degeneration of the people, could be attributed to the system of education now adopted in the State.

There were many defects in the administration of the Education department of the State. In fact the department had become a lifeless machinery, mainly existing for conducting examinations and inspections, for making appointments and for exercising disciplinary action against the subordinates. It had no concern regarding the student population or the educational policy which should benefit them. It was a great pity that every year Rs. 40 lakhs were spent in maintaining such a department.

There was not a single individual among the student population who knew Travancore History and Travancore Geography. These subjects were taught only up to the fourth class. In all the civilized countries of the world, the teaching of the history and geography of one's own country was given very great prominence in the curricula of studies in the schools. But the State Education department was quite averse to the introduction of such subjects in the schools of the State.

The Text Book Committee was not functioning properly. Many vagaries were perpetuated therein. None of the books selected by